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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: INDIA-PAKISTAN RELATIONS/ WAR AGAINST TERRORISM, HOLBROOKE VISIT; NEW DELHI - FEBRUARY 14-17, 2009.

This countrywide cable reports on relevant media reaction/opinion from India's large non-English press. The Mission reports on English-language media via email through the daily "Early Edition" summary.

INDIA-PAKISTAN RELATIONS/ WAR AGAINST TERRORISM

[¶](#)1. "PAKISTAN4S CRISIS," editorial in the February 16 nationalist RASHTRIYA SAHARA Hindi daily: "Pakistan President Asif Ali Zardari's saying that the Taliban is trying to take over Pakistan is not surprising. The Taliban and Al-Qaida are spreading terror with the aim of global jihad and their first target is Pakistan and Afghanistan. The Pakistan government is internally accused of taking military action in the terrorist controlled areas only for the sake of the U.S., but not out of national interest. Zardari should not forget that it is nobody but Pakistan who created and supported these terrorists. Zardari will have to understand that the terrorists' supporters are very well represented in the Pakistani administration because of its policy of exporting terrorism to India. If Zardari has actually realized what he is saying then he should shed his post-Mumbai incident attitude. India can help Pakistan. Pakistan should accept that it alone cannot fight terrorism and should let India, the U.S. and others destroy terrorist hubs."

12. "PAKISTAN ON TRACK," editorial in the February 14 nationalist RASHTRIYA SAHARA Hindi daily: "The entire world, including India, wants to end global jihadi terrorism. Since Pakistan is the centre of terrorism, our policy and outlook should be focused on how to destroy the basic terrorist structure developed on Pakistani soil. We should prepare Pakistan to give 100% against terrorists. Considering Pakistan has accepted - if only partly - that Kasab and other terrorists are its citizens, and that the Mumbai terror attacks were planned on its soil, we should wait but be alert. We will have to answer Pakistan's long list of questions. But the good thing is that the world is in our favor on the Mumbai strikes. And those nations which sympathize with Pakistan cannot openly support it. However, since the U.S. is already focusing on Pakistan and Afghanistan to give its war against terror a decisive turn, Pakistan will certainly become the centre of this strategy. That means that the result will be in our favor. The Indian strategy should be planned considering all these aspects."

13. "PAKISTAN'S REPLY," editorial in the February 14 centrist NAVBHARAT TIMES Hindi daily: "In response to the Indian dossier, Pakistan finally accepted that the Mumbai terror attacks were conceived on its soil. It has realized that if it does not change its attitude it could be isolated. The change of power in the U.S. has also affected its attitude. U.S. President Barack Obama has given Pakistan a strict warning that if it wants U.S. aid it will have to take effective measures against

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terrorists. His special envoy Holbrooke's Pakistan visit is meant to make Pakistani leaders understand that it cannot, as it has, adopt a strategy of striking deals with the U.S. in the name of terrorism. Most likely Pakistan answered India's dossier after Holbrooke put pressure on it. Whatever the case, India cannot trust Pakistan because it is expert in playing tricks. It takes action only under pressure. Thus, we should continue our campaign among the international community so that Pakistan cooperates in carrying forward the investigation process."

14. "ZARDARI CRIES WOLF" editorial in the February 17, 2009, Mumbai edition of centrist Marathi daily LOKMAT. "After acknowledging the Pakistani connections with the Mumbai terror attacks, Pakistani President Asif Zardari has adopted a new survival strategy. He has spelt out the likelihood of an anti-Pakistan terror strike from the Taliban. India and the entire world community needs to look into the veracity of his latest claim, because all that happens in Pakistan affects India as well. Zardari's claim may be a sly attempt to extract U.S. financial aid in the name of Taliban terror... of course, the Taliban is a notorious entity and it may have actually prepared for a takeover of Pakistan, as Zardari claims. Whatever the circumstances, Zardari's remarks cannot be overlooked..."

15. "PAKISTAN OFFICIALLY ACCEPTS RESPONSIBILITY FOR MUMBAI ATTACKS" editorial in the February 14, 2009 centrist Gujarati daily GUJARATMITRA. "At last, succumbing to an incessant barrage of warnings from India and pressure from the international community, especially America, Pakistan has finally and officially accepted the responsibility for the 11/26 Mumbai terror attacks. It is worth noting here that this late admission comes as a surprise considering that Pakistan has been in denial mode over this issue from the very beginning. One should not forget that much needs to done. Pakistan is the epicenter of terrorism. The Taliban has threatened India with retaliation if India attacks Pakistan. This speaks volumes of Pakistan's association with the radicals and extremists. What Pakistan has done is only mild scolding of such rogue elements. Pakistan's sincerity in the war against terrorism can only be trusted if it hands over to

India all those involved in the Mumbai attacks. Mere admission doesn't exonerate Pakistan from the greater responsibility of ensuring that the guilty are brought to justice appropriately." A similar editorial appeared in the February 14, 2009 Mumbai-based centrist Gujarati daily JANMABHOOMI.

¶6. "A PRAISE WORTHY ATTEMPT", editorial in the February 14 right-of-center Urdu daily RASHTRIYA SAHARA, New Delhi: "The Pakistani home minister for internal security said that both India and Pakistan would have to combat the menace of terrorism together. He added that seeking information from India is also towards this end, so that the culprits involved in the Mumbai attacks could be brought to book. The government of India has also lauded this attempt on the part of Pakistan. This latest step

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taken by Pakistan can very well be called a positive step in the right direction to build good relations between the two countries and permanent stability in the subcontinent region. The government of India should also try to reap the harvest by providing all possible detailed information in this respect, extending cooperation to the Pakistani leadership, so that the culprits can be apprehended and the victims of the dastardly acts of terror may get some solace. Pakistan also needs to appreciate this, knowing that it itself is facing the wrath of terrorists."

¶7. "CONFESION BY PAKISTAN", editorial in the February 14 right-of-center Urdu daily MUNSIF, Hyderabad: "On the whole, it is indeed the first step of Pakistan in the right direction and of course it is a laudable step. Another aspect which is being reiterated by Pakistan is the possible involvement of local people in the Mumbai attacks. Great caution needs to be observed in replying to Pakistan. The question does not pertain to any one community; rather it is an issue related to the massacre of many innocent people. No law would justify the acts perpetrated by a murderer, on the condition that sufficient evidence to bring him to book is made available by India. The queries being put forth by Pakistan can be answered on the basis of this evidence. However, no person from any community should be arrested merely on the basis of trivial suspicion. This issue does not pertain to India and Pakistan alone; instead it concerns the entire global world. Pakistan may have acted under the steady pressure of the international community, particularly America.

¶8. "FINALLY, PAKISTAN ADMITS", editorial in the February 14 right-of-center Urdu daily SIASAT, Hyderabad: "It could be the pressure of the international community or the continuous hammering by New Delhi which has finally led Pakistan to make an acknowledgement. Now that it has owned up, it is its moral responsibility to take comprehensive action against those who are responsible for taking innocent lives; this would make the world trust in the intentions and sincerity of Pakistan in bringing the culprits to book. India should also try to use diplomatic channels to keep building up the pressure on Pakistan, keeping in view its confessions so that action is taken against the guilty. The Pakistani government should be given adequate time to act upon its promises and demonstrate its sincerity. India avoided military action against Pakistan in the aftermath of the attacks. Instead, it resorted to diplomatic channels to exert itself. At last, it has emerged successful, while Pakistan was made to own up."

HOLBROOKE VISIT

¶9. "OBAMA'S SPECIAL CAMPAIGN," op-ed in the February 15

right-of-center DAINIK JAGRAN Hindi daily by strategic affairs specialist K. Subrahmanyam: "The Obama

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administration has appointed Richard Holbrooke as a special representative to Afghanistan and Pakistan to concentrate on this most complex part of U.S. foreign policy. President Obama accepts that the Afghanistan problem cannot be solved until the safe havens for the Taliban and Al-Qaeda in Pakistan are destroyed. He clarified that Pakistan will only get U.S. aid if it acts forcefully against terrorists.... Holbrooke will face not just jihadi terrorist ideology, but the nuclear threat as well. Pakistan can blackmail the U.S. and the international community with the prospect of nuclear weapons technology getting into the wrong hands. The Pakistan army and government have proved, by releasing A.Q. Khan when Holbrooke came to the region, that they permitted nuclear proliferation and that if their demands are not taken into account it could happen again. It has given Holbrooke a fair idea of his limits in the region."

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